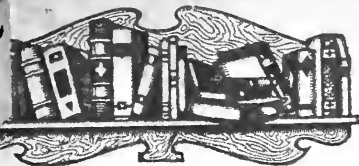


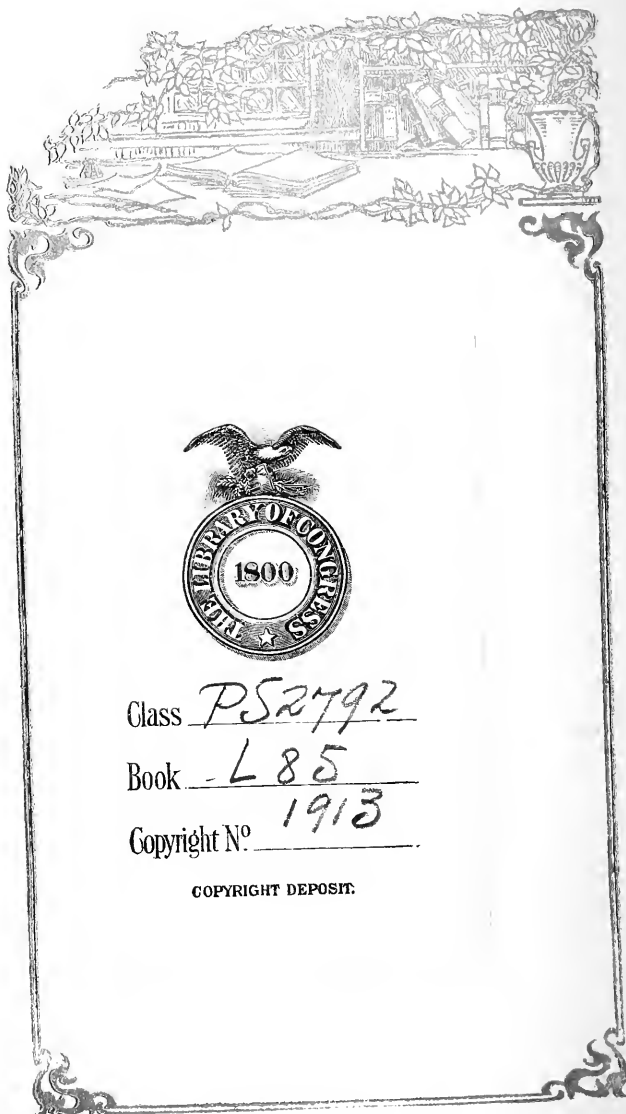
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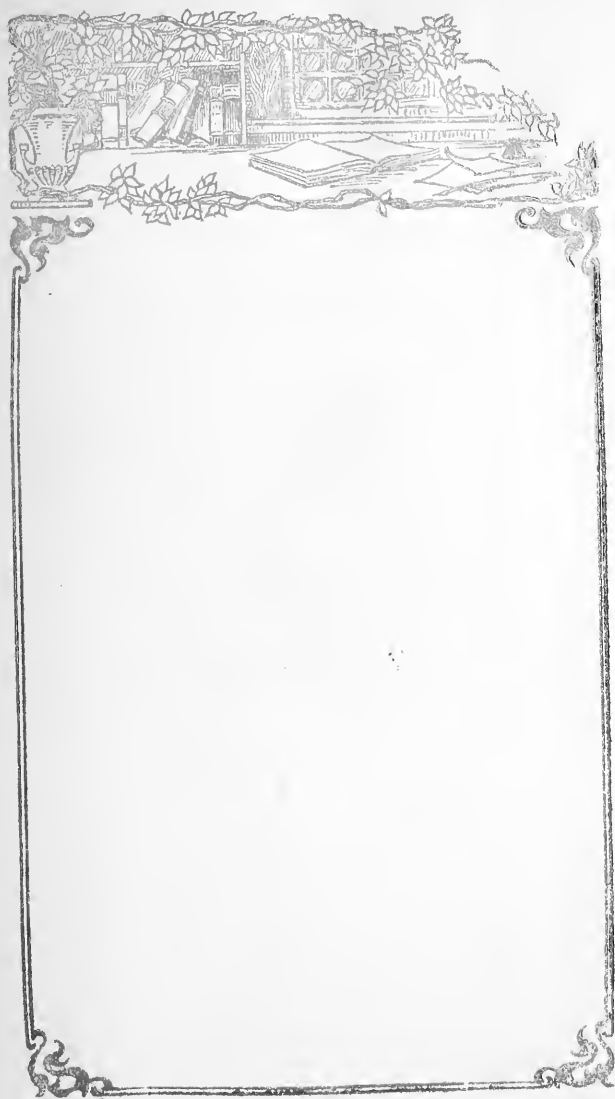


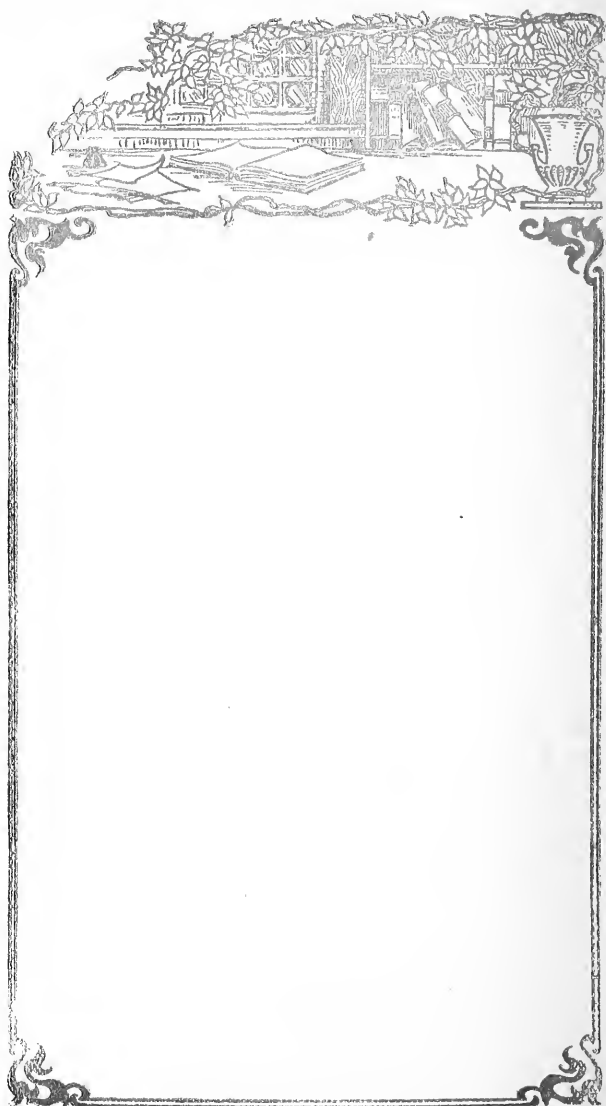
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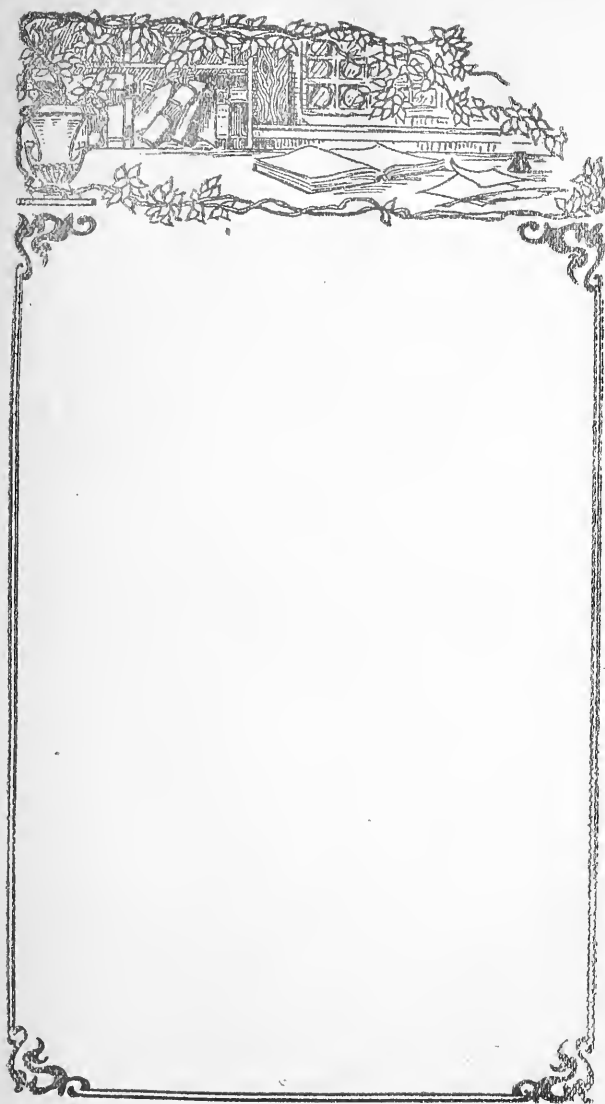
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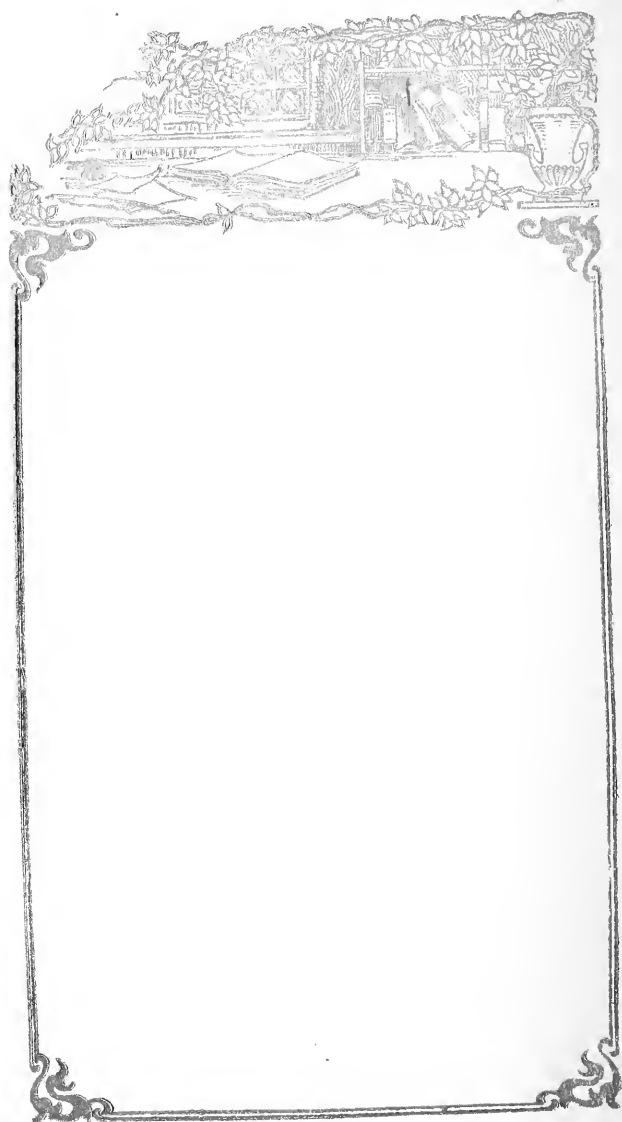
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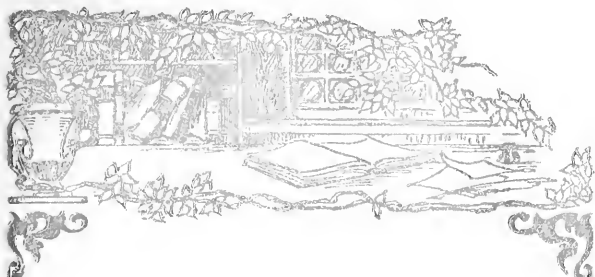
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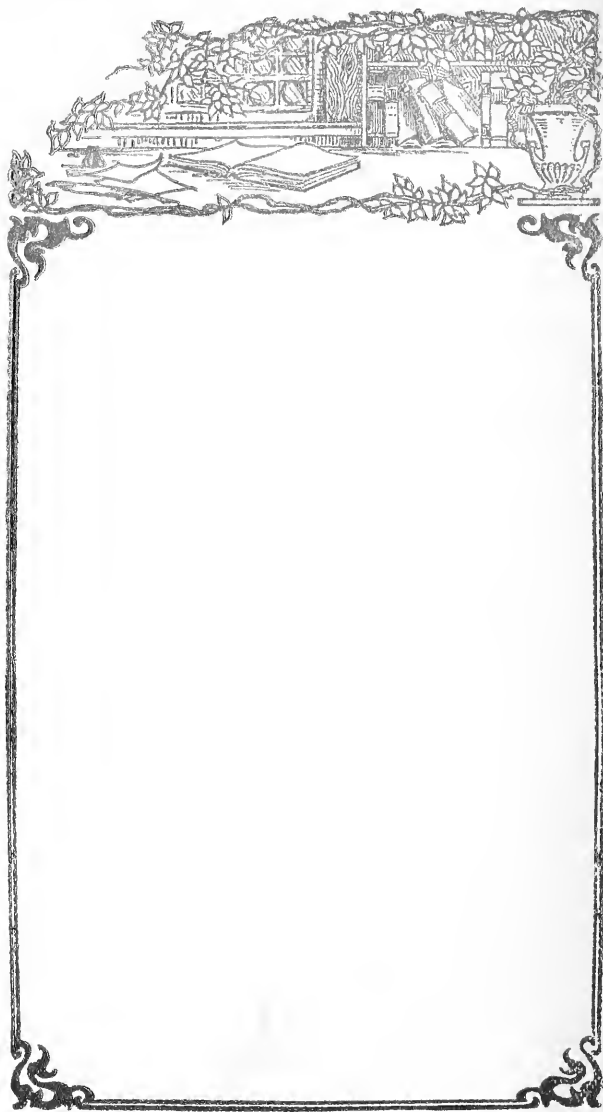


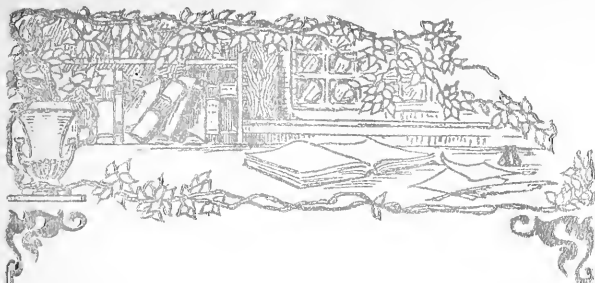






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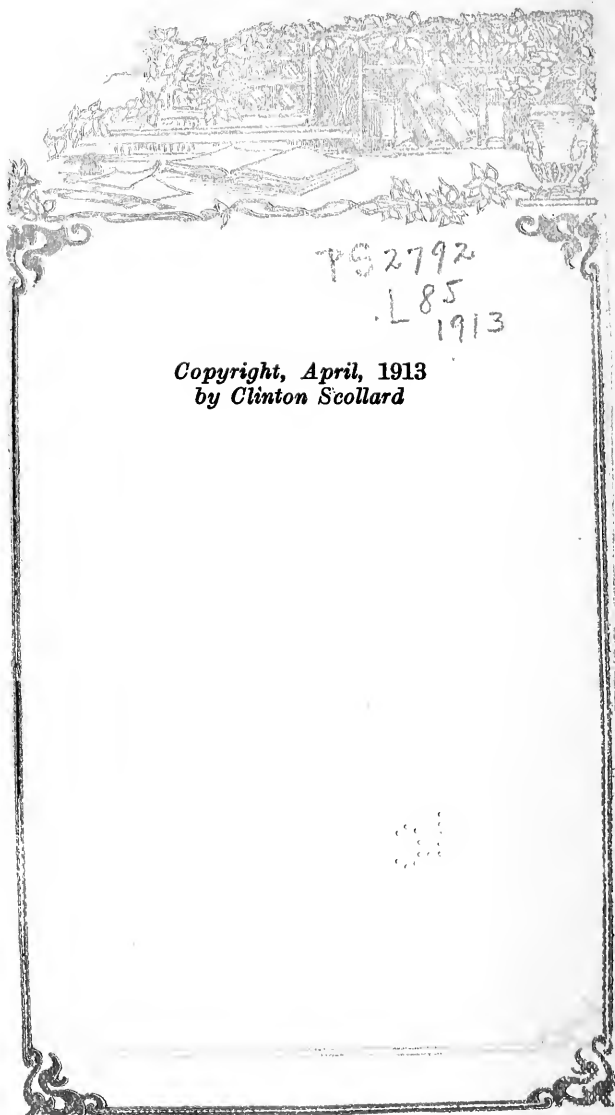
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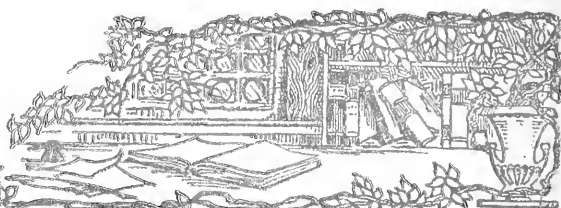
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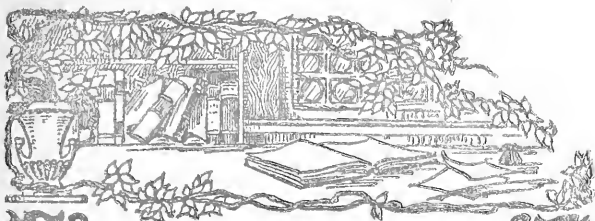
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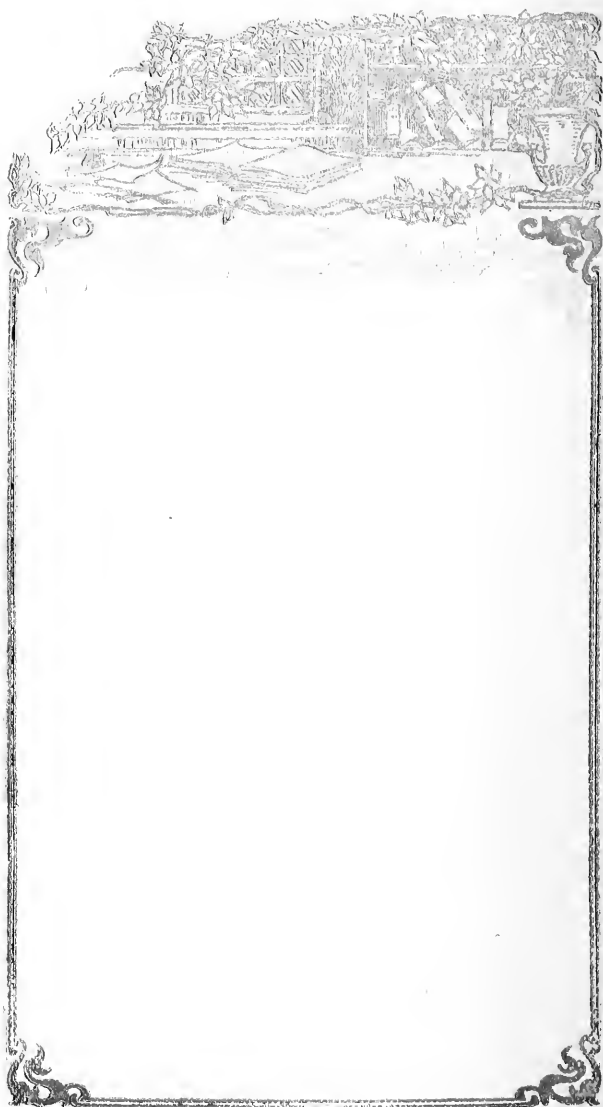
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*From the oriels, one by one,
Slowly fades the setting sun;
On the marge of afternoon
Stands the new-born crescent moon;
In the twilight's crimson glow
Dim the quiet alcoves grow;
Drowsy-lidded Silence smiles
On the long, deserted aisles;
Out of every shadowy nook
Spirit faces seem to look,
Some with smiling eyes, and some
With a sad entreaty dumb;—
He who shepherded his sheep
On the wild Sicilian steep,
He above whose grave are set
Sprays of Roman violet;—
Poets, sages—all who wrought
In the crucible of thought.
Day by day as seasons glide
On the great eternal tide,
Noiselessly they gather thus
In the twilight beauteous,
Hold communion each with each,
Closer than our earthly speech,
Till within the east are born
Premonitions of the morn!*





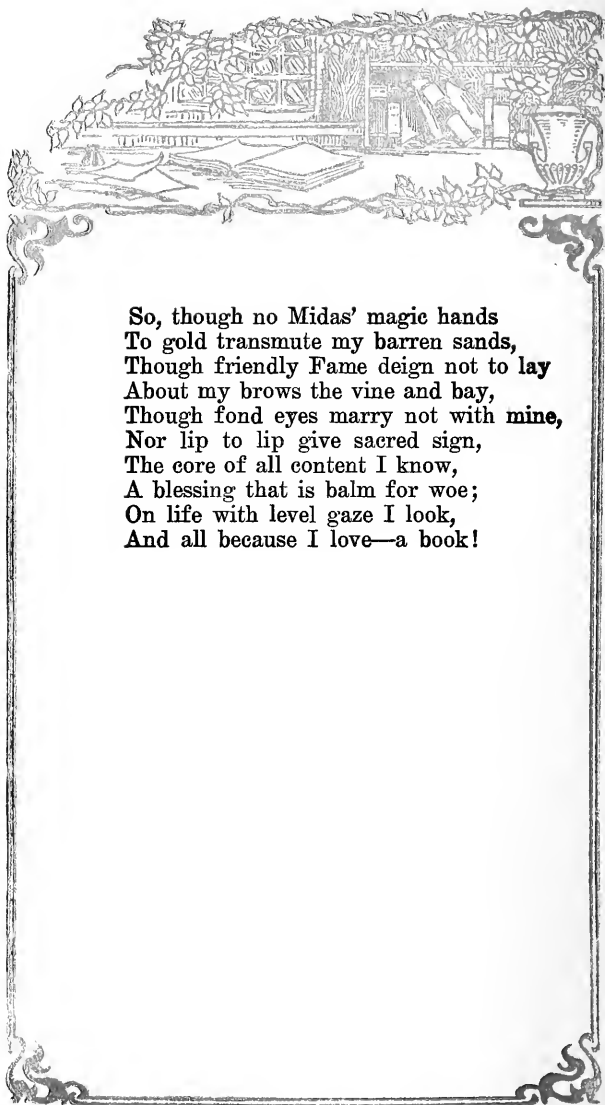
THE BOOK - LOVER

I love a book, if there but run
From title-page to colophon
Something sincere that sings or glows,
Whate'er the text be, rhyme or prose.
And high-perched on some window-seat,
Or in some ingle-side retreat,
Or in an alcove consecrate
To lore and to the lettered great,
For happiness I need not look
Beyond the pages of my book.
Yea, I believe that, like an elf,
I'd be contented with a shelf
If thereupon with me might sit
Some work of wisdom or of wit
Whereto, at pleasure, I might turn,
And the fair face of Joy discern!

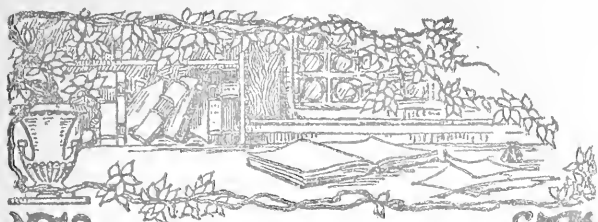
I love a book,—its throbbing heart!
And while I may not hold the art
That dresses it in honor scant,—
The tree-calf "tooled" or "crushed"

Levant,—

Rather a rare soul, verily,
Than a bedizened husk for me!

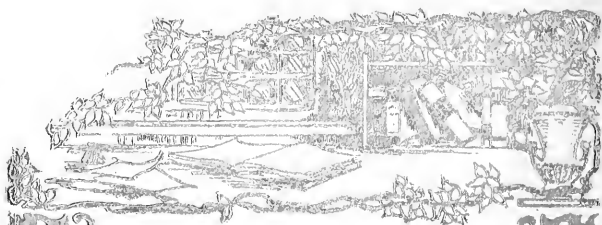


So, though no Midas' magic hands
To gold transmute my barren sands,
Though friendly Fame deign not to lay
About my brows the vine and bay,
Though fond eyes marry not with mine,
Nor lip to lip give sacred sign,
The core of all content I know,
A blessing that is balm for woe;
On life with level gaze I look,
And all because I love—a book!



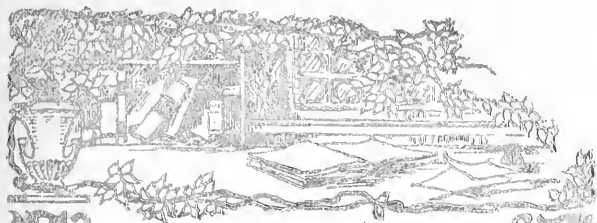
ON A COPY OF KEATS' "ENDYMION"

Has not the glamoured season come once more,
When earth puts on her arras of soft green?
See where along the meadow rillet's shore
The wild-rose buds unfold!
Eastward the boughs with murmurous
laughter lean
To warm themselves in morning's generous
gold.
The foxgloves nod along the English lanes
That saw erewhile the dancing sprites of snow;
Night-long the leaf-hid nightingale complains
With such melodious woe
That Sleep, enamored of her soaring strains,
Is widely wakeful as the dim hours go.
Ope but the page—and hark, the impassioned
bird
That through the hush of the be-shadowed
hours
Pours in the ear of dark its melting word!
Here is as mellow song
As ever welled from pleachèd laurel bowers,
Or e'er was borne soft orient winds along;
Here may one list all ecstasies they sung,
The shepherds and the maids of Arcady,
Flower-garlanded what time the world was
young;—
Pandean minstrelsy,
Low flutings from slim pipes of silver tongue
Played by the dryads on some upland lea.



And blent with these are heavenly whisperings
As faint as whitening poplars make at dawn,
Sublime suggestions of fine-fingered strings
Touched in celestial air,
And earthward through the dulling ether
drawn,
Yet falling on us more than earthly fair;
The voice divine that young Endymion knew
In the cool woodland's darkmost depths by
night,
When godlike ardors thrilled him through and
through;
And his voice from the height
Whither, on wakening, drenched with chilly dew,
He sought the goddess in the gathering light.

But ah, what mournful memories are mine,
Song-wakened at this lavish summer-tide!
Can I forget that sombre cypress line
By old Rome's ruined wall,
The lonely grave that alien grasses hide,
And the pathetic silence shrouding all?
Who would forget? Blest be the song that bears
My soul across aerial seas of space
As wingedly as airy fancy fares!
For now that earth's worn face
The radiant glow of life's renewal wears,
Would I in reverence seek that sacred place.



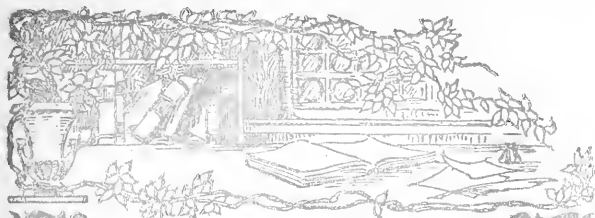
There would I lay these woven shreds of rhyme
In lieu of scattered heart's-ease and the rose.
Behold how Song has triumphed over Time,
For still *his* song rings clear,
Though where the tender Roman violet grows
Deep has he slumbered many a fateful year!
If to the poet's rapt imaginings
Beauty be wed, with love of purpose high,
Despite the cynic and his scornful flings
Song shall not fail and die,
But like the bird that up the azure springs
Still thrill the heart, still fill the listening sky!



WITH HERRICK IN SPRING

Now that all the wakened hills
Arrased are with tender green,
And the noon-gold daffodils
Greet their over-lord, the sun,
Now that tulips show their sheen,
And a thousand ardors run
Mead and orchard lane along—
Voices virginal with song—
Here's the book unfolds to me
How to-day may still be won
The old path to Arcady!

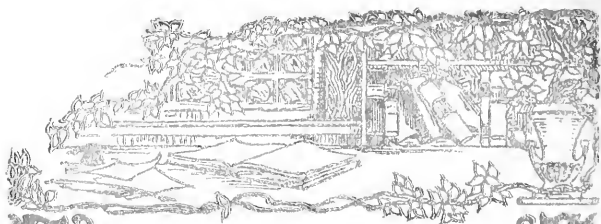
Pastoral revelry and rite,
Clear airs consecrate to Pan,
Dreams of innocent delight,
Love in frolic guise arrayed,
Merriment of maid and man
In the sunshine and the shade,
Here behold, compacted rare,
Ever fresh and ever fair!—
Herick, pray reveal to me
(Singer Hesperidian)
Still the path to Arcady!



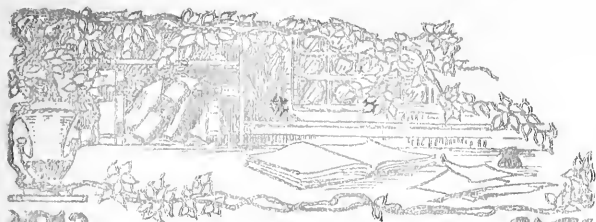
JOHN CLEVELAND, POET-CAVALIER

He was a fearless fighting man,
This handsome anti-Puritan
Who smote with pen and eke with sword
Against the bluff Cromwellian horde.
Disciple deft of Doctor Donne,
Had kindlier fate but shone upon
His curls, in cut so cavalier,
Delightful ditties to endear
His name adown the years might ring
For man's perennial pleasuring.
Alack-a-day! It might not be!
For he, of his Latinity
So proud, so fain of his conceits
Beside the Cam's elm-bowered retreats,
From haven was swept fast and far,
And under grim War's sanguine star
Was rudely tossed and racked and swirled,
Then pent within a prison-world,
And finally flung forth too spent
To long fight life's vexed argument.

You know him not? Have hardly heard
His lightest claim to fame averred?
Well, 'tis but flotsam, that may be
The all he left posterity.
Yet somehow in the strokes he dealt
"Old Noll" (I pledge he raised a welt!)



And in dactylic dash displayed
Anent some merry Cambridge maid,
And in fleet lyric flights where he
Ran riot in hyperbole,
I seem to catch—elusive—thin—
The magical what-might-have-been!
So, o'er the gulfs of Time, good cheer,
John Cleveland, poet-cavalier!



ON A COPY OF THEOCRITUS

(VENICE, 1493)

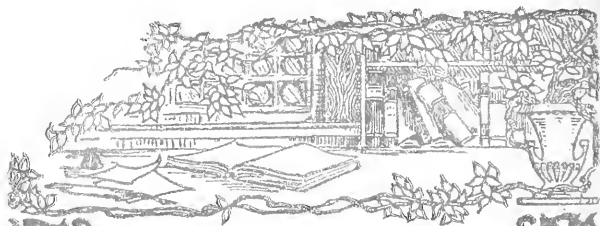
Theocritus, we love thy song,
Where thyme is sweet and meads are sunny,
Where shepherd swains and maidens throng,
And bees Hyblean hoard their honey.

Since ancient Syracusan days
It year by year has grown the sweeter,
For year by year life's opening ways
Run more in prose and less in metre.

And than this quarto, vellum-clad,
You could not wish a rarer setting;
Beholding, you must still be glad,
If you behold without forgetting.

Manutius was the Printer's name—
(A *Publisher* was then unheard of)
A fellow of some worthy fame,
If history we take the word of.

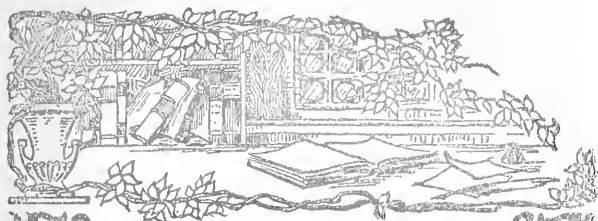
Think when its pages first were cut,
And eager eyes above them hovered,
Our proudest dwelling was a hut—
America was just discovered!



Then Venice was indeed a queen,
And taught the tawny Turk to fear her;
Now has she lost her royal mien,
And yet we could not hold her dearer.

Betwixt these covers there is bound
A charm that needeth no completion;
A golden atmosphere is found
At once Sicilian and Venetian.

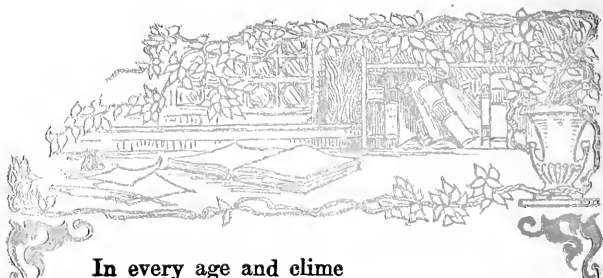
So, while our plausible song we raise
And hail the bard whose name is famous,
Let us for once divide the bays,
And to the Printer cry—*Laudamus!*



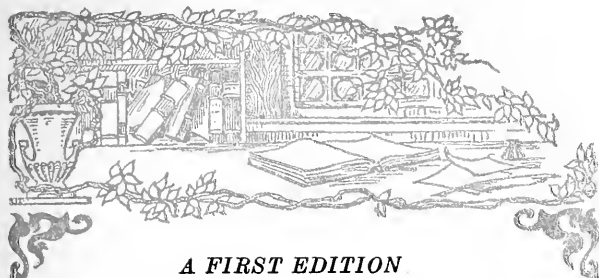
THE BOOKSTALL

It stands in a winding street,
A quiet and restful nook,
Apart from the endless beat
Of the noisy heart of Trade.
There's never a spot more cool
Of a hot midsummer day
By the brink of a forest pool,
Or the bank of a crystal brook
In the maples' breezy shade,
Than the bookstall old and grey.

Here are precious gems of thought
That were quarried long ago,
Some in vellum bound, and wrought
With letters and lines of gold;
Here are curious rows of "calf,"
And perchance an Elzevir;
Here are countless "mos" of chaff,
And a parchment folio,
Like leaves that are cracked with cold
All puckered and brown and sere.



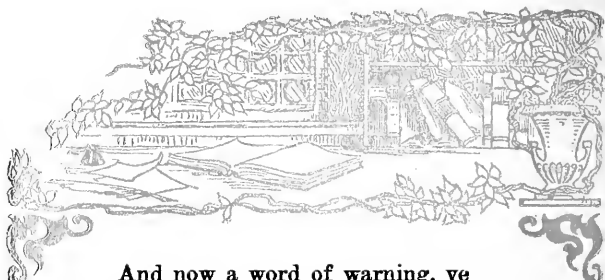
**In every age and clime
Live the monarchs of the brain :
And the lords of prose and rhyme,
Years after the long last sleep
Has come to the kings of earth
And their names have passed away,
Rule on through death and birth;
And the thrones of their domain
Are found where the shades are deep,
In the bookstall old and grey.**



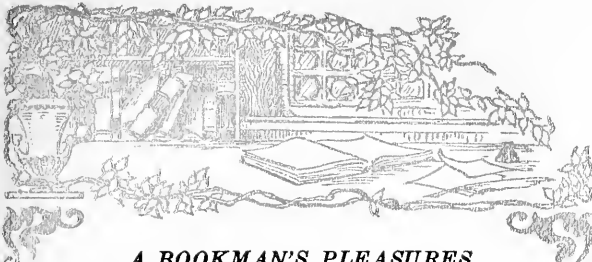
A FIRST EDITION

A most exclusive clan are we,
Proud of our peerless pedigree;
Will Caxton fathered us, a man
Shaped somewhat on the clerkly plan,
But one of whom we're fond withal,
Industrious and not prodigal.
Now comely, now unkempt, we show—
Octavo, duodecimo!
But whether dimmed or bright our page,
We glow to know our lineage.
Black-lettered first, clear-lettered last—
The present, or the golden past—
We stand content our fame upon
From fly-leaf through to colophon.

As among all patricians, fine
And fair ensamples of our line
Arouse our self-complacency;
Viz., Caxton's priceless Malory;
A Tyndale Bible (choicer none!);
A Shakespeare in full folio done;
A song that tells of Paradise
Which Milton saw with darkened eyes;
And that rare "find" of later vein,
The little *liber*, Tamerlane!



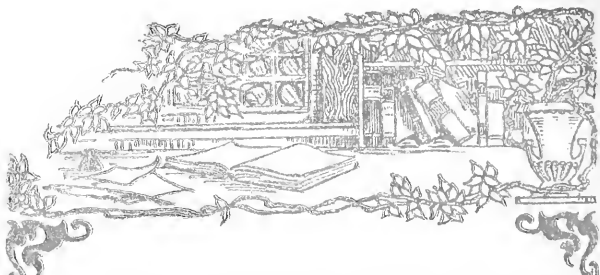
And now a word of warning, ye
Who seek our constant company!
Unless your purses, plethoric, hold
The round and clearly-minted gold,
Abjure us, shun us, lest the night
Creep on ye, and pale candle-light
Find ye by us uncomforted,
And slipping supperless to bed!



A BOOKMAN'S PLEASURES

Life yields rich pleasures in its varied round,—
The fair unfolding of the season's store,—
Hearts by the ties of faithful friendship bound,
The litany of love and all its lore;
The bud of beauty opening evermore
In forms of fresh perfection that allure;
The morn's unfailing miracle; the pure
And passionless decline of twilight-tide:
Yet what gives joy more sweet, serene and
sure
Than some dear volume by the ingle-side!

There is delight in melody;—the sound
The minstrel sea makes as it woos the shore;
The strains the wind evokes; the music found
Where feathered throats their ecstacy
outpour;—
In stilled aroma from the rose's core;
In the mime's grave or comie portraiture;
In rest and dreams when rigid frosts immure;
In deeds self-sacrifice has sanctified;
Yet what gives joy more sweet, serene and
sure
Than some dear volume by the ingle-side!



Theocritus whom Grecian garlands crowned;
The Mantuan who Augustan laurels wore;
The sire of English song who broke the ground
Whereon have trodden many a tuneful score;
Avon's immortal son whom all adore;
The twain who sleep by Roman walls secure;
And he who far from Highland loch and moor
Keeps his last tryst where southern seas sweep
wide;
Aye, what gives joy more sweet, serene and
sure

Than some dear volume by the ingle-side!

Friends, of the many pleasures that we poor
Mortals may taste, the while that we endure
This wayfaring, till death our paths divide,
Know there is none more sweet, serene and sure
Than some dear volume by the ingle-side!



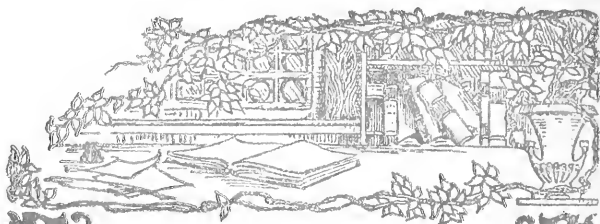
A BOOK-LOVER'S CHOICE

For some, about the honeyed heart of June,
To drift and dream, amid the golden shine,
Down placid waters, is the dearest boon;
For some, what time the skies incarnadine,
To list the thunder of the ancient brine
That swirls, as though 'twere chaff, the stoutest
prow;

For me, line marrying with jeweled line,
"A book of verses underneath the bough!"

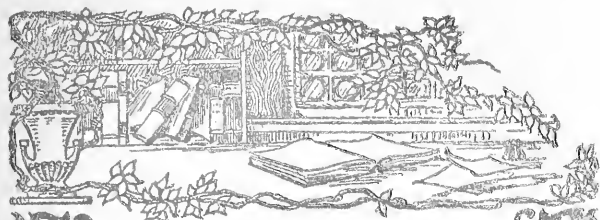
For some the light of the enamored moon,
Flooding the sky as with ethereal wine,
The while impassioned night-birds trill in tune,
And Love plucks lilies for the votive shrine!
For some the prospect, distant and divine,
Billowing below a mighty mountain's brow;—
For me, serene, sequestered, and supine,
"A book of verses underneath the bough!"

For some the mellow and mysterious croon
Of the warm south, at twilight faint and fine;
For some the garden, with its radiant rune,—
The violet, the pink, the eglantine;



For some such ruins as the Rhone and Rhine
With a vague charm of legendry endow;
For me, who reverence the wreathéd Nine,
"A book of verses underneath the bough!"

Whose verses? Thine, O Poet of the Vine,
Omar, high honored, both of yore and now!
How sweet to read until the day's decline
Thy book of verses underneath the bough!



A FIRST EDITION COPY OF LOVELACE

(BRITISH MUSEUM READING-ROOM)

The yellow half-light shines within
On many a bulky quire;
Without the pavements roar with din,
And reek with ooze and mire.

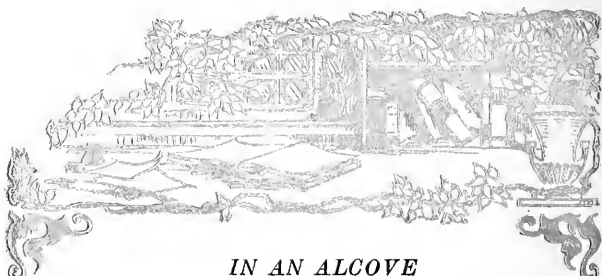
Sold at a bookshop called "The Gun"
That stood in Ivy Lane,
The page before me, soiled and dun,
Exhales both joy and pain.

Brooding upon those troublous times,
In most bewitching wise
I see from out the courtly rhymes
The sweet Lucasta rise.

The brow no grief has writ upon,
The Saxon eyes sincere,
And all the winsome grace that won
The poet-cavalier.

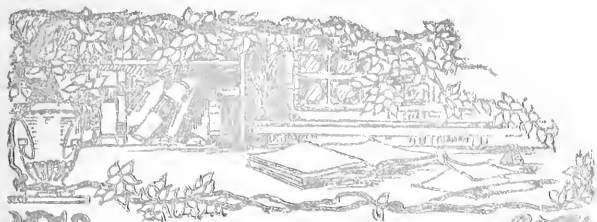
The voice—but hold! what voice is that?
'Tis Sylvia's, I aver!
A beauty in a Bond Street hat
Who begs me go with her.

Who could withstand that tender touch,
Those glances that implore?
Dick Lovelace, though I love thee much,
Forsooth, I love *her* more!



IN AN ALCOVE

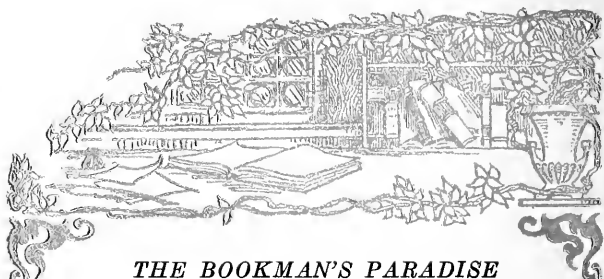
Once more am I at middle day
In tranquil twilight hid away,
Where not a sound disturbs the sense
Of book-encompassed indolence.
Pale, grave-eyed Science does not brood
Above this sunless solitude,
Nor does Romance's ardent face
With antique glamour fill the place;
A fairer form the vision views,
The gracious presence of the Muse.
Small meed of gold she offers those
Who leave the wider ways of Prose
To follow where her foot-fall leads
Along the asphodelian meads,
Nor is she prodigal to lay
Upon the brow the wreathéd bay:
Yet are her votaries content,
Aye, more, their lot seems opulent,
If on them be by her conferred
Some transient, dream-evoking word!
It may be but a whisper low,
Yet straightway are the skies aglow;
It may be but the lightest breath,
And yet how it illumineth!
And though beyond all heart-appeal
Her lips a cruel silence seal,
A holier influence fills the air
Through her benignant presence there;
Ah, how would earth and heaven unroll
Could one but know her lyric soul!



WILLIAM WINSTANLEY, CRITIC
(1687)

Long are the years, Sir Critic, long,
Since you your galaxy of song
Set with such pomp and proud intent
Fair in the Muse's firmament!
We can but smile at your acclaim,
Or be it praise, or be it blame;—
Whether at Milton's fame you flout,
Cry how his candle is snuffed out,
And glory, in judicial ease,
O'er his poetic obsequies;
Or whether you the merits chant
Of Cleveland or of Davenant;
Patronize Shakespeare, or dismiss
Herrick with light hypothesis.

Out of the misty long ago
This truth your volume lives to show,—
That, though their wit be Hermes-shod,
Critics, like Jove, do sometimes nod.
'Tis Time alone, with certain hand,
Winnows the gold from shard and sand.



THE BOOKMAN'S PARADISE

A little stand without the door
Whereon scant treasure is arrayed,
Yet just enough to tempt explore
The inner depths of dust and shade;
Enter; how glade on bookish glade
Parts right and left to peering eyes,
Proclaiming both to man and maid—
This is the bookman's paradise!

There is a shelf of ancient lore,
Black-lettered pages overlaid
With umber mottles, score on score;
There is an alcove filled with frayed
Tall folios standing stiff and staid,
Like knights of mediæval guise;
Open, and *why* 'tis straight displayed
This is the bookman's paradise.

Delve deep, and with what golden ore,—
What riches will your hands be weighed!
Each corner owns its precious store,—
Poets from Homer down to Praed,
Philosophers, and those that trade
In tales that scoffers label "lies";—
The few whose fame shall never fade;—
This *is* the bookman's paradise.

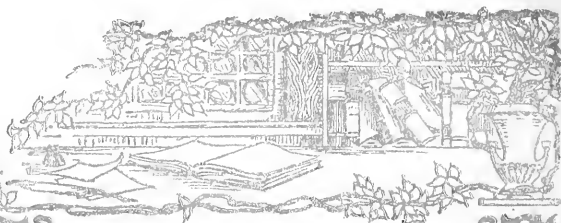
Collectors, of each grain and grade,
When ye shall come to "price" a prize,
Although ye may be sore dismayed,
This is the bookman's paradise!



A BOOKWORM'S PLAINT

To-day, when I had dined my fill
Upon a Caxton,—you know Will,—
I crawled forth o'er the colophon
To bask awhile within the sun;
And having coiled my sated length,
I felt anon my whilom strength
Slip from me gradually, till deep
I dropped away in dreamful sleep,
Wherein I walked an endless maze,
And dined on Caxtons all my days.

Then I woke suddenly. Alas!
What in my sleep had come to pass?
That priceless first edition row,—
Squat quarto and tall folio,—
Had, in my slumber, vanished quite;
Instead, on my astonished sight
The newest novels burst,—a gay
And most unpalatable array!
I, that have battered on the best,
Why should I thus be dispossessed,
And with starvation, or the worst
Of diets, cruelly be curst?



TO WILLIAM SHARP
(FIONA MACLEOD)

The waves about Iona dirge,
The wild winds trumpet over Skye;
Shrill around Arran's cliff-bound verge
The gray gulls cry.

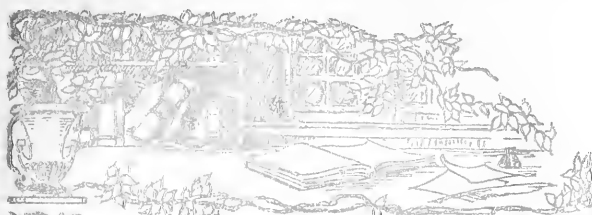
Spring wraps its transient scarf of green,
Its heathery robe, round slope and scar;
And night, the scudding wrack between,
Lights its lone star.

But you who loved these outland isles,
Their gleams, their glooms, their mysteries,
Their eldritch lures, their druid wiles,
Their tragic seas,

Will heed no more, in mortal guise,
The potent witchery of their call,
If dawn be regnant in the skies,
Or evenfall.

Yet, though where suns Sicilian beam
The loving earth enfolds your form,
I can but deem these coasts of dream
And hovering storm

Still thrall your spirit—that it bides
By far Iona's kelp-strewn shore,
There lingering till time and tides
Shall surge no more.

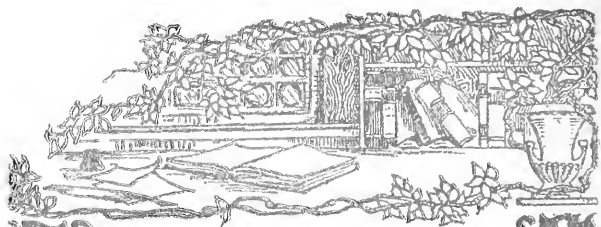


A FORGOTTEN BARD

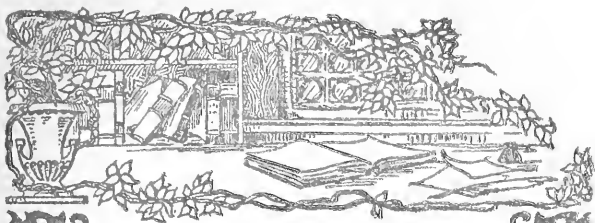
In a dim nook beneath the street
Where Pine and noisy Nassau meet,
This little book of song I found
In a scarred morocco quaintly bound.
Each musty and bemildewed leaf
Bespeaks long years of grime and grief;
Long years,—for on the title-page
A dim date tells the volume's age.

Ah, who was he, the bard that sung
In that dead century's stately tongue
In those evanished days of yore?—
An empty name—I know no more!
Yet, as I read, will fancy form
A face whose glow is fresh and warm,
A frank, clear eye wherein I view
A nature open, genial, true.

Mayhap he dreamed of fame, but fate
Has barred to him that temple's gate;
He loved,—was loved,—for one divines
An answered passion in his lines;
He died, ah, yes, he died, but when
He ceased to walk the ways of men,
Or where his clay with mother clay
Commingles sweetly, who can say!



In pity will I give his book
A not too lonely study nook,
Where kindly gleams of light may play
Across it of a wintry day;
And I will take it down sometimes
To con the prim and polished rhymes.
Will thus, when the gray years have fled,
Some book of mine be housed and read?



AT GOLDSMITH'S GRAVE

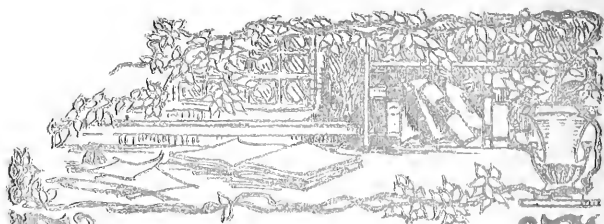
On Goldsmith's grave to-day
I found a wreath of bay,
Laid by some loving hand; whose, none
may say.

Though since he ceased to be
The surge of Time's great sea
Has swept unceasing, green his memory!

For through his limpid lines,
Unfailing, one divines
A humorous tenderness that sings and
shines.

'Twas his unconscious part
To touch the human heart
With a fine feeling that is more than art.

So, where his bones repose
In the gray Temple-close,
Shall mingle laurel, ivy and the rose!



IZAAK WALTON'S NAME

As I went down the crowded Fleet,
An idler without aim,
I marked above the roaring street
Dear Izaak Walton's name.

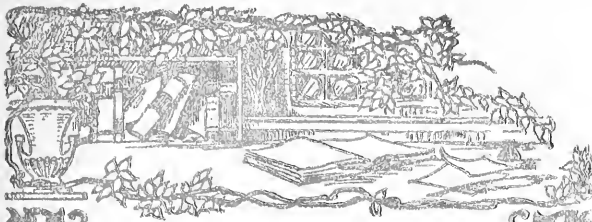
A marble tablet in the wall
(Saint Dunstan's in the West)
A brief but fair memorial
In graven lines expressed.

How sweet 'mid London's turbid ways,
'Neath skies so dull and dim,
To find in terse but gracious phrase
This kindly word of him!

Dear Izaak of the simple heart,
The quiet country love!—
I saw before my vision start
The winding dale of Dove;

Its slopes that shimmered in the sun,
Its stream that rippling ran,
And on the grassy margin one—
One happy fisherman!

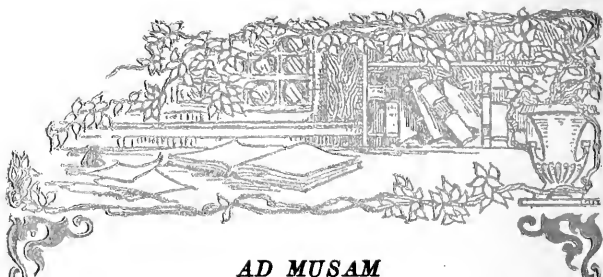
Some treasure statesmen, martyrs, kings,
Heroes of noble fame,
But here a vagrant rhymers sings
Dear Izaak Walton's name!



THE SONNET

**What is the sonnet? 'Tis a lovely flower
Of fourteen perfect petals! From the bloom
Exhales so soft, so subtle a perfume
That it has sweetened many an empty hour;
Born in a beautiful Italian bower,
Fair root it found beneath the glow and gloom
Of changeful English skies, and welcome room
In other climes, each richer for its dower.**

**What passionate attar Shakespeare from it won!
How it for Milton bourgeoned, and how Keats
Nurtured it gladly in his garden-close!
Still in its heart hide undiscovered sweets;
So, poets, put your fondest care thereon,
As doth a gardener on his rarest rose!**



AD MUSAM

**Muse, thou hast been my gracious solace long,
Making melodious discordant days,
Leading my feet adown the pleasant ways
Within the precincts of the gates of Song.
Thou hast interpreted grim Winter's wrong,
The vernal wonder, Summer's bright displays,
The pomp of Autumn; many a varied phase
That life reveals with its trans-shifting throng.**

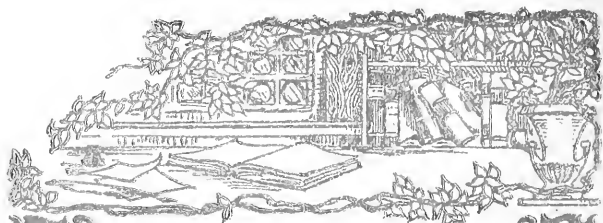
**The rich inheritor through thee am I
Of castles, aye, of kingdoms! Every clime
And age yields something from its treasure-
store
For thee to clothe anew and vivify.
Dust buried by the tireless hands of Time
Thou hast transmuted into magic ore!**



THE SINGERS

You who have quaffed from Aganippe's spring,
And know the kindling rapture, hail and hear!
Your eyes have caught the vision
 morning-clear,
The poignant, incommunicable thing,
That bade you ope your silent lips and sing,
 Fond and forgetful, and fain but to hear
 The music swell and ebb, to you as dear
As its own flute-notes to the golden-wing.

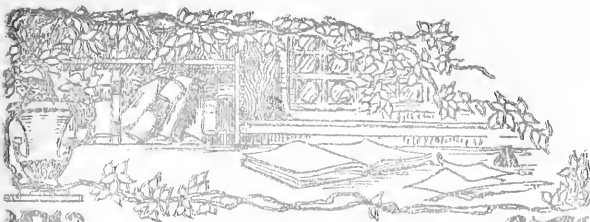
Be you contented, though on evil days
Your paths have fallen when the art of yore
 So revered is held as is a shard;
Sing on, sing on, nor falter nor deplore!
He to the Muse the truest tribute pays
 Who finds in song song's most divine
 reward!



ON A COPY OF BAYARD TAYLOR'S
"XIMENA"

This was the first libation that he poured
Upon the consecrated shrine of Song,
His sovereign lady through his whole life long,
Howe'er he wandered, worshipped and adored;
Whether he strayed where Syrian vultures
soared
In the blue vault, or where the turbaned
throng
Surged in swart Egypt, or with lash and thong
Urged the swift sledge o'er Lapland field and
fiord.

Rare little tome of meek and modest mien,
Scanning your pages now the years have run
Through many a lustrum since you saw
the day,
I seem to read your buoyant lines between,
Lines where Youth treads the daffodilian way,
How high of heart was our Deucalion!



A SUMMER MOOD

The majesty of the Miltonic line
Allures me not to-day, nor paradise,
Unless it be in Julia's winsome eyes
As hymned by Herrick, with his lute-note fine;
Not the Shakespearean altar-fire divine
Beguileth me, save where, in tender wise,
It plays through Rosalind's questions and
replies,
Or Beatrice's sallies set a-shine.

The day is one of laughing Lovelace mood,
Tricksy with frolic fancies such as gave
To Suckling's wit its nimbleness and zest;
For me Terpsichore, the Muse they wooed—
Those cavaliers so debonair and brave—
And at her maddest and her merriest!



SIDNEY LANIER

The marshes spread in the autumnal sun
Their symphony of blended green and gold
As when he saw them, while the multifold
Tide-heralds of the ocean race and run
Vociferous landward, and the creek-banks dun
Feel the cool gush of waters o'er them rolled;
Inlet and cove caressed are and consoled,
And the parched meads have cooling solace won.

Ofttimes from sweet communion with his peers
In that fair bourn beyond the dusk and dawn
Whither he went, our eyes with grief
bedimmed,
(Ah, stern are the irrevocable years!)
I dream that he is earthward backward drawn
To these lone marshes that he loved and
hymned.



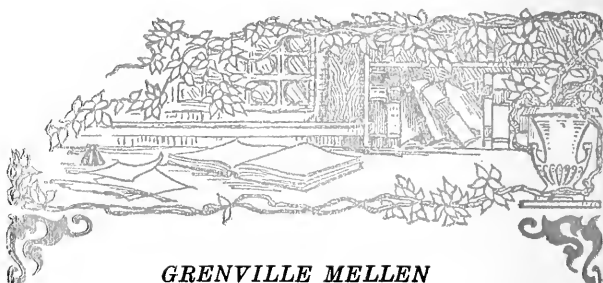
PHILIP FRENEAU

Now that the vesper-planet's violet glow
Is smothered in a welter of gray cloud,
And all the winds that sweep the sky are loud,
I mind me how, one white night long ago,
Our earliest poet, valiant-souled Freneau,
By the stern stress of years assailed and
bowed,

Fell by the way, and found a fatal shroud
In the benumbing silence of the snow!

When the young nation shook with war's grim
throes,

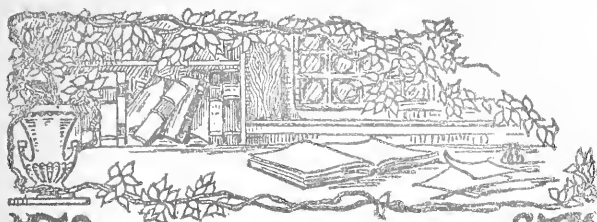
The smiting of his song was as a sword,
The light of it was as a beacon flame;
And though the drift of Time's unpitied snows
Upon the mound that hides his dust be poured,
It may not dim the glory of his name!



GRENVILLE MELLEN

Poet that livest in a single line,—
"Above the fight the lonely bugle grieves,"—
About thy grave on cloud-encompassed eves
The banded winds in consonance combine
To breathe forth battle strains;—a fitting shrine
For such impassioned utterance!—the leaves
Falling the while, and sad autumnal sheaves
Against the sunset etched in weird design.

There is the pathos of all mourning airs,
And of the fading pageant of the year,
In unfulfilled ambition such as thine;
And yet thy brow one leaf of laurel wears;
Niggard of favor is the Muse austere,
Poet that livest in a single line!



ON RE-READING SCOTT

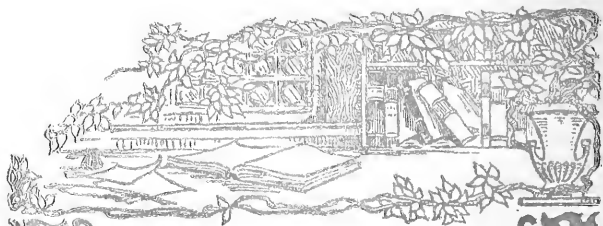
Muse, for a little while put by the lute!
The shawm, the cymbal, and the drum be
thine!

The imperious trumpet, evermore the sign
Of arms and banners and of high dispute!
Let for a space the lips of love be mute,
While martial words with martial airs
combine!

Away luxurious ease, with song and wine—
Dreams and desires of Pleasure's languid fruit!

Hail the free winds abroad upon the moors,
The caves, the crags, the forests, and the
sound
Of mighty deeds sword-done by land and
sea!

Aye, hail the lofty spirit that endures
Through all the years from Time's remotest
bound—
The spirit of leal-hearted chivalry!



THE BIRTH OF THE SONNET

Beyond where Scylla and Charybdis roared,
In the old days of hale Odyssean worth,
Where pale Proserpine of joy had dearth
In the fair fields of Enna the deplored,
Where asphodels still show their golden hoard,—
The flowerful largess of Sicilian earth,—
There, it is said, the sonnet had its birth,
A limpid song from melody's chalice poured.

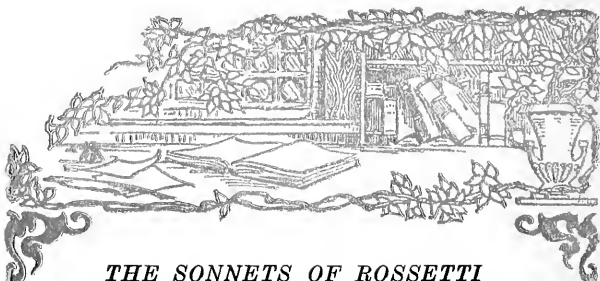
And they, the bards who shaped the stately form,
Their names are but blown waifs upon the
wind;
Their bones with yellowed dust long since
were one;
But still the sonnet, living, vital, warm,
In many a bosom lovingly enshrined,
Sings on and on in choral antiphon.



THE TROUBADOURS

What of the bards who in love's white demesne
Made lyric dalliance, and linked their rhymes
Beside the rippling Rhone in bygone times,
Each choosing some sweet lady for his queen?
Gallant they were, nor scorned the battle scene,
Albeit they tuned beneath the scented limes
Their soft lute-pleadings to the castle chimes
Of fair Provence, girt with its vineyards green.

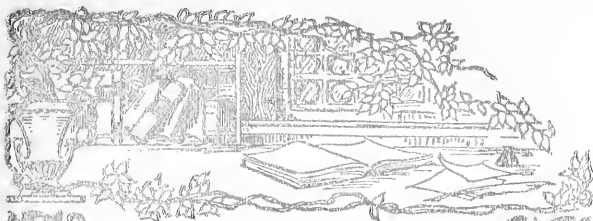
Shapers of song, if but a jest to-day
Your art is made, a byword on the lip
Of those whose hearts this age of trade
immures,
Take courage! you, by right of comradeship,
Have rich inheritance from such as they;—
You are the heirs of all the troubadours!



THE SONNETS OF ROSSETTI

Dream-led, methought I wandered through a maze
Wherein immortal Beauty had her bower;
Delicious waftures from the jasmine-flower,
And floating veils of delicate amber haze,
Mysteriously adown mysterious ways
Were borne, and every part of every hour
Had Song's enchanting cadence for its dower,
Paeans immaculate in Beauty's praise.

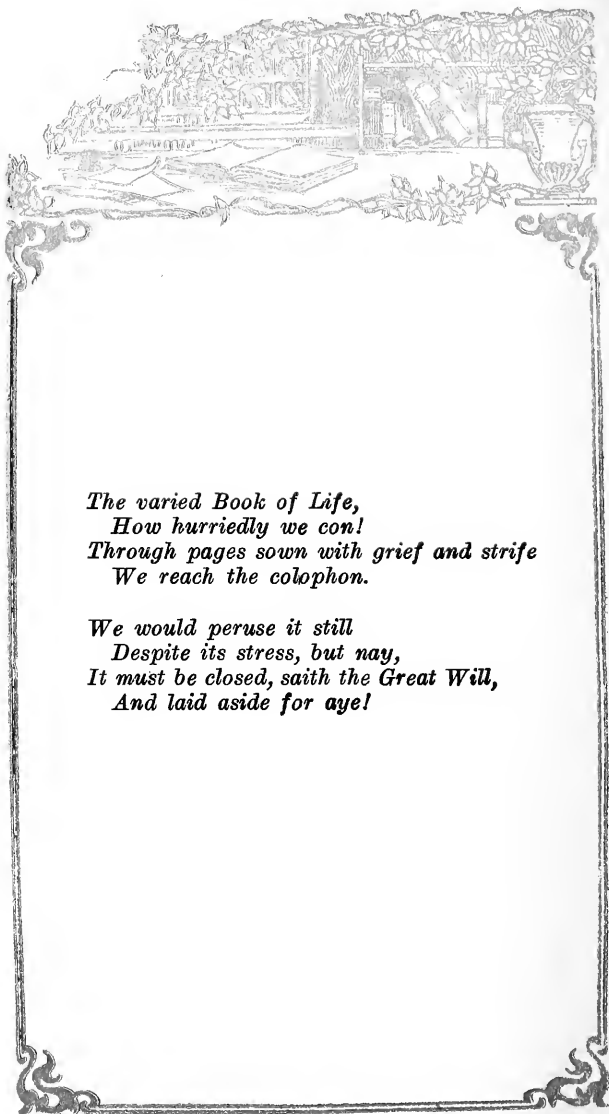
Like this beguiling maze his sonnets seem
Wherein the questing wanderer may find
Harmonies haunting as the twilight wind,
Charms as elusive as the shores of dream;
Perfumes far-drifted from the Isles of Ind,
And all of Beauty's glamour and its gleam.



TO THOMAS S. JONES, JR.

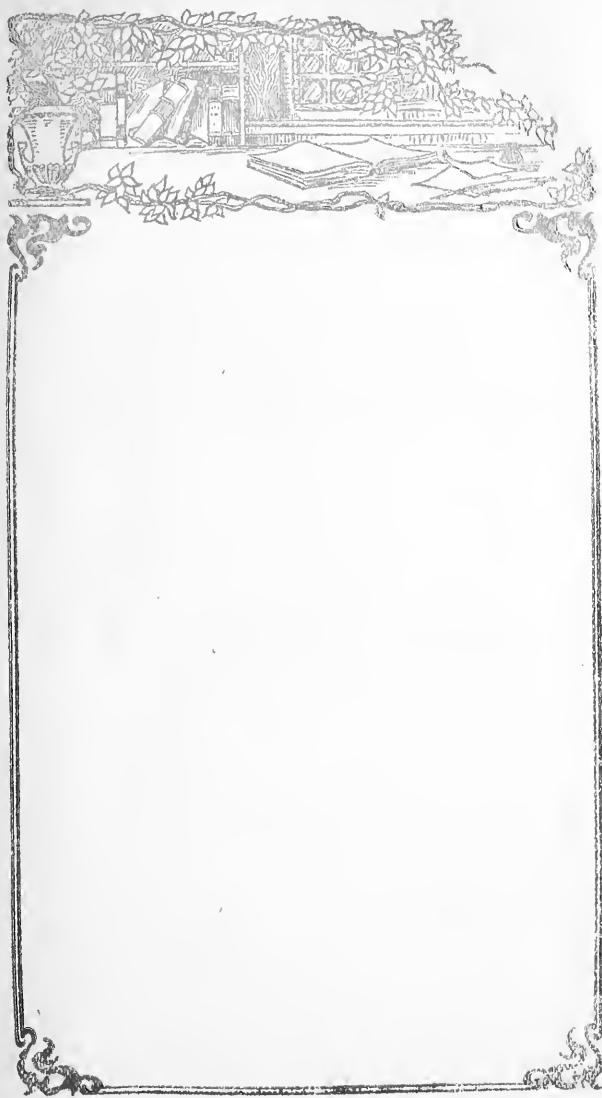
I can recall within some orient land,
Where every dawn is like a golden psalm,
How in a mosque, beneath a stately palm,
I saw a rare mosaic, deftly planned—
Marble as stainless as is Beauty's hand;
Deep chrysoberyl glistening like the calm
Of ocean; agate like the tufted balm
Burning in August woods when noons are bland.

Aye, and the burnished bosom of the jade,
The violet veins of lapis-lazuli,
The topaz-heart that holds the sun in fee;
Thus is your song-mosaic interlaid,
Not only lovely to the outer eye,
But to the inner sense a harmony!

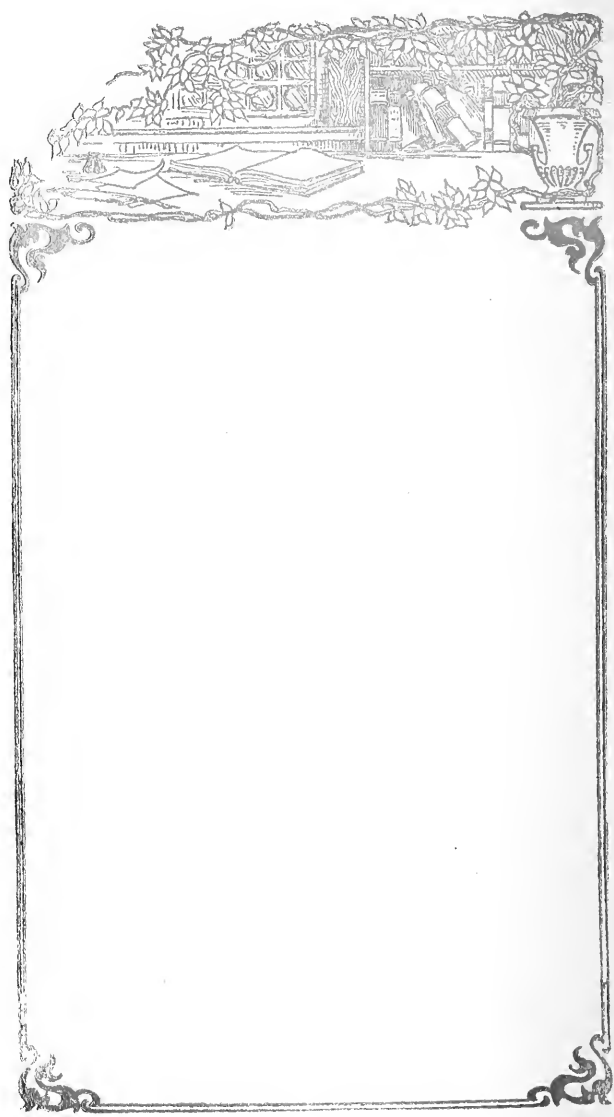


*The varied Book of Life,
How hurriedly we con!
Through pages sown with grief and strife
We reach the colophon.*

*We would peruse it still
Despite its stress, but nay,
It must be closed, saith the Great Will,
And laid aside for aye!*



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